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UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre: progress report and proposed activities for 2003-2005**

Summary

Since its creation in 1988, the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (IRC) has made major contributions to socio-economic research highlighting the impact of economic policy on children and to improved understanding of children's rights. IRC contributes cutting-edge research to influence policy-making in favour of the world's poorest and most marginalized children and their families; informs policy formulation within UNICEF; strengthens the role of UNICEF as an advocate for children's rights; and supports programme development and capacity-building.

The proposed programme for 2003-2005 builds on these established areas of expertise, lessons learned during the current programme, guidance provided by the IRC International Advisory Committee and consultations with key partners. It promotes the growing role of IRC as a centre of reflection and cross-fertilization of experience to raise the profile of children's issues in national and international agendas, while promoting learning within UNICEF itself. The programme will enable IRC to consolidate an agenda for its reinvigoration as a centre of excellence for children's rights.

The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board approve the extension of the Centre's work for the period 2003-2005 to strengthen UNICEF capacity to explore new dimensions of its future agenda and use the organization's field experience to inform cutting-edge research. A total allocation of $14 million in other resources is proposed, of which the Government of Italy has pledged to

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provide a minimum of 5,430,000 Euro (approximately $5 million) for the Centre's core activities, with the remainder to be sought from other donors for specific activities.

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I. Introduction

1. The UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (IRC) was established in Florence, Italy, in September 1988. Its mandate, as defined in "The organization of the United Nations Children's Fund" (E/ICEF/Organization/Rev.3 of 24 April 1998), is to strengthen the capacity of UNICEF and its cooperating institutions to respond to the evolving needs of children and to promote an emerging new global ethic for children. The Centre serves as an international knowledge base for the effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in both developing and industrialized countries.

2. IRC promotes children's rights by collecting and analysing best practices and lessons learned, and developing policy studies and case materials on child rights issues. It undertakes research on the implementation of the Convention, reviews methodologies for socio-economic policy analysis and the promotion of "child-friendly" policies, and develops advocacy materials to advance the cause of children's rights. Its research feeds into UNICEF strategic planning, policy formulation, advocacy and programme development.

3. IRC research focuses on three areas: issues that are relatively new to UNICEF; statistics and issues that might be sensitive or controversial; and knowledge gaps in areas that are already part of the mainstream work of UNICEF. These criteria have been endorsed by the Executive Director (in a 1997 Executive Directive), by the Executive Board and by the IRC International Advisory Committee.

4. The development of the programme of activities for 2003-2005 was guided by the International Advisory Committee, which met late in 2001 to address the issue. The Committee, chaired by the UNICEF Executive Director, assists the IRC Director on policy matters in the context of cooperation with the Government of Italy and the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, the host institution in Florence. The Committee includes representatives of other donor countries, members of UNICEF senior management and National Committees for UNICEF, and international child development and human rights experts. Representatives from UNICEF country offices and the Committee on the Rights of the Child also participated in the meeting to discuss the new programme. The structure of the Committee reflects the determination of IRC to ensure that its work is of relevance and value to UNICEF and its partners at all levels.

5. The programme has also been informed by the Centre's accountabilities, as defined in "The organization of the United Nations Children's Fund"; the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for 2002-2005; "A World Fit for Children", the outcome document of the Special Session on Children; and the Millennium Development Goals.

6. The new programme promotes the role of IRC as a centre for reflection and cross-fertilization of experience to increase the profile of children's issues in national and international agendas, while promoting learning within UNICEF itself. The programme will enable IRC to consolidate an agenda for its reinvigoration as a centre of excellence for children's rights.

7. The development of the new programme was preceded by the renewal of cooperation agreements with the Government of Italy and, subsequently, with the *Istituto degli Innocenti*. Both IRC and the *Istituto* are committed to strengthening

collaboration to promote children's rights, focusing on the main priorities of consolidating the new Innocenti Library, the development of a European network on a research agenda for children in armed conflict, support to the European Network on Ombudspersons for Children and enhancement of the "Child-Friendly" Cities Initiative.

8. IRC receives funding from the Government of Italy for its core functions, with additional financial support for specific projects provided by other Governments, international institutions and private sources, including National Committees for UNICEF.

II. Implementation of the current programme, 2000-2002

9. The current IRC programme was approved by the Executive Board for the period 2000-2002 (E/ICEF/1999/7/Rev.1, decision 1999/18). Guided by the three criteria for its work, during this period, IRC has pursued research to increase support for implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to promote understanding of the impact of economic and social policies on children. Another major priority has been to improve the Centre's communication outreach.

A. Promoting implementation of international standards and creating awareness of children's rights

10. IRC has pursued research in areas that support the role of UNICEF as an advocate for children's rights. For example, the *Innocenti Digest* series of publications promotes the implementation of international standards and raises awareness of children's rights. The *Digests* provide concise yet thorough reviews of selected thematic areas, serving as "road maps" for new issues. Expert consultations are held during the preparation of each *Digest* to ensure that current thinking and relevant field experience are reflected. *Digests* have covered such topics as early marriage, gender violence, birth registration (see panel) and independent human rights institutions for children. The latter updated a previous study on "Ombudswork for Children" (1997); provided the framework for the first global meeting of independent human rights institutions for children, held during the General Assembly Special Session on Children; and served as a resource for the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Birth registration

"Birth Registration: Right from the Start" (*Innocenti Digest #9*, 2002) focuses on the child's right to an identity and to protection from discrimination and social exclusion. It presents birth registration as a human right, enshrined in article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which allows for access to such basic social services as education and health care, and plays a crucial role in protecting children from exploitation and abuse. Finding that more than 50 million babies are not registered each year, the *Digest* explores the obstacles to universal birth registration and highlights the measures needed to ensure the registration of every single child. The *Digest* has generated massive interest and is

being used by UNICEF country offices to support campaigns on this issue.

11. Recognizing the central role of the family in child development and protection, IRC researches the many challenges faced by children deprived of a family environment. IRC has contributed to the debate on intercountry adoption and the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad. Working with relevant partners, IRC supported legal reform on adoption in Romania, and in cooperation with the UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Baltic States, is developing guidelines on intercountry adoption and prevention of its abuse in the region. IRC also continued to advance the debate on children deprived of parental care. Its fourth *Regional Monitoring Report*, "Children at Risk in Central and Eastern Europe" (1997), led to the first regional conference on this issue, which was held in Budapest, Hungary, in October 2000 and was organized by the UNICEF Regional Office, the National Committees for UNICEF from the region and the World Bank.

Protection from discrimination and promotion of social inclusion

12. The converging focus of IRC on the protection of children from discrimination and social exclusion is reflected in a number of *Innocenti Digests*, such as that on "Early Marriage" (*Innocenti Digest* #7, 2001), which are used as key resources for UNICEF country offices.

13. Building on the establishment of the International Child-Friendly Cities Secretariat at IRC in 2000 following the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), IRC focused on translating the commitments of the Convention on the Rights of the Child for use at the municipal level. Working with a range of partners, IRC is preparing an *Innocenti Digest* on poverty and exclusion among urban children, to be published late in 2002.

14. To counter the social exclusion and discrimination experienced by children, IRC carries out research on access to and quality of basic social services, particularly basic education, primary health care and clean water. Drawing on case studies from over 30 developing countries, "Basic Services for All?", published in April 2000, addressed the human cost of insufficient allocation of resources to ensure universal child access to these services. In 2001, working with the UNICEF Division of Evaluation, Policy and Planning, IRC pursued its work in this area with "Public spending for the poor: Basic services to enhance capabilities and promote growth".

Promotion of child participation

15. In keeping with article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, IRC undertakes research to enhance the right of children to participate in the decisions that affect them. "Promoting Children's Participation in Democratic Decision-making", published in 2001 as part of the *Innocenti Insight* series, examines article 12 as a tool to help children express views and prevent abuses of their rights. With its clear checklists for child participation in conferences, the publication was an important resource for the Special Session on Children.

16. The Seventh *Regional Monitoring Report*, "Young People in Changing Societies", included the views of young people from six countries in transition (Czech Republic, Latvia, Romania, Russian Federation, Ukraine and Uzbekistan). Their responses provided a "snapshot" of how these particular young people felt about the changes in their societies, and the report was a key resource for the first Regional Conference on Children in Europe and Central Asia, held in Berlin, Germany, in May 2001 as part of regional preparations for the Special Session on Children. Together with the UNICEF Regional Office and the World Organization of Scout Movements, IRC also developed a youth discussion guide to the publication. Written in an accessible style, with input from more than 200 young people from the region, it is now used by scouting leaders across the region and forms part of UNICEF programmes for young people in a number of countries in transition.

Protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation

17. IRC research on protection from violence includes "Domestic Violence against Women and Girls" (*Innocenti Digest #6*, 2000), published for the Beijing +5 Special Session of the General Assembly in May 2000. The *Digest* examined the scale of this phenomenon, highlighting domestic violence as a global, yet relatively hidden, human rights issue. It emphasized the need for coordinated and integrated policy responses, implementation of existing international standards and greater accountability from Governments.

18. To ensure the protection of children in conflict with the law, IRC has examined various dimensions in the area of the administration of juvenile justice. The IRC draft strategy paper on juvenile justice, prepared in collaboration with UNICEF headquarters, has been discussed with UNICEF regional child protection advisers and at regional meetings and national seminars. IRC is now researching the minimum age of criminal responsibility, a topic on which the Committee on the Rights of the Child plans to make a general comment. IRC has also focused on juvenile justice in conflict and post-conflict situations, having commissioned eight country studies and prepared an analytical overview for an IRC workshop on the topic held in 2001.

19. In the area of protection of children against armed conflict, IRC, in cooperation with the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, the Government of Italy and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, hosted the first international workshop on a research agenda to address this issue in July 2001.

20. Child labour is an area of child protection that remains compromised by poor understanding of the nature and scale of the phenomenon. IRC has a history of work in this field, including research on the role of education to prevent this form of child economic exploitation. As a follow-up to the International Conference on Child Labour, held in Oslo, Norway, in 1997, and in an effort to develop effective, long-term solutions, IRC hosts an inter-agency cooperation project between UNICEF and the International Labour Organization (ILO), "Understanding Children's Work". The project aims to increase understanding of child labour and identify means by which it can be eliminated. It also promotes better data collection and analysis; supports field-level efforts; and promotes research on knowledge gaps, including on child labour and school attendance and achievement, the health impact of child labour and the worst forms of child labour. The project is financed by the Governments of

Finland, Norway and Sweden and will be reviewed in September 2002. In its initial phase, the project has taken stock of existing child labour information and interventions, creating a database, developing country statistics and compiling a comprehensive bibliography, information that is available on the internet at www.ucw-project.org.

21. IRC research on other dimensions of child labour includes analysis of home-based work, an area that has been studied little. A project on outsourcing of manufacturing aims to fill a knowledge gap on this virtually "invisible" area. Action-oriented research studies were conducted in India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand, in partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working with home-based labourers and with ILO as a stakeholder. The research found that more home-based child workers were out of school than those from a control group of households who were not engaged in home-based manufacturing. In South Asia in particular, their working hours were incompatible with full-time schooling. The results of the research are being used to inform UNICEF work for child-care and health interventions for families engaged in home-based work.

B. Emerging areas

22. IRC carries out research on a number of emerging issues. The project on child trafficking in West and Central Africa, for example, aims to increase awareness of this child rights violation and to enhance national capacities and cross-border cooperation to address it. In partnership with the UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa, a review has been conducted in eight countries to identify positive experiences, stimulate effective policy responses, and enhance regional and inter-agency cooperation, while strengthening UNICEF work in this area. The research was presented at the Second World Congress on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in December 2001 in Yokohama, Japan, and its main findings were published under the *Innocenti Insight* series and launched at the Special Session on Children. IRC will continue to work on this area and will support the work on trafficking in human beings that will be considered at the next European Union/Africa Summit, scheduled to take place in Lisbon, Portugal, in early 2003.

23. IRC has completed a global study on HIV/AIDS, public policy and child well-being based on nine country case studies (six in Africa and three in Asia) and a review of five key areas: the health sector; the education sector; access to anti-retroviral drugs; economic impact; and child impoverishment and orphanhood. The study examines the impact of HIV/AIDS on the well-being of children and families and on the smooth functioning of the societies in which they live. It also calls for a new focus on the wider impact of HIV/AIDS on children's lives, specifically for pro-active public policies with a long-term approach to address falling school enrolment, increased malnutrition and rising poverty.

C. Monitoring the impact of economic and social policies

24. IRC has a long history of monitoring the impact of economic and social policies on the situation of children in both developing and industrialized countries. Its mandate to promote children's rights in every country — rich or poor — is

reflected, in particular, by its research on the impact of the transition in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States since 1992, and its continuing research on the situation of children in countries that are members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The MONEE Project — Monitoring the transition in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

25. The IRC MONEE Project has monitored the human impact of changes in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States since 1992, putting children high on the political agenda in the region and generating high-level policy debate on their rights. The Project has three components: high-profile publications; the TransMONEE database; and capacity-building for data collection and analysis.

26. Two regional monitoring reports have been published during the current programme, feeding into the end-decade assessments for the Special Session on Children and providing critical inputs for its preparatory process and regional events. This played a crucial role in the first Regional Conference on Children in Europe and Central Asia, held in Berlin, Germany, in May 2001, in which decision makers from transition countries and Western Europe participated.

27. "Young People in Changing Societies", the seventh *Regional Monitoring Report*, was the first full assessment of the situation of the 65 million young people aged 15-24 years in the Central and Eastern Europe/CIS region. Citing young people as a resource, the report calls for new dialogue with them to create "youth-friendly" policies, and also set a precedent by including the views of young people from six transition countries. The report was launched successfully in more than 20 countries, frequently with the active participation of children and young people. The report was a key resource for the World Health Organization (WHO) European Ministerial Conference on Young People and Alcohol in November 2000, and serves as a policy and advocacy tool for countries and institutions in the region.

A decade of transition

The eighth *Regional Monitoring Report*, "A Decade of Transition" (November 2001), built on years of MONEE research to provide the first comprehensive assessment of a decade of transition. The report contributed to the end-decade review process and provided vital information for the Special Session on Children. Examining 10 years of developments in income inequality and child poverty, health, education and public care for children, the report finds a mix of successes and failures. Economies may be growing and rates of infant, adolescent and maternal mortality may have fallen, but the crises of the 1990s have taken a toll — every country in transition experienced an economic slump, and one third of them experienced conflict. The report finds almost 18 million children in poverty in the region at the end of the 1990s; around 1.5 million children in public care; and increases in tuberculosis, child malnutrition and HIV/AIDS. It calls for a sustained attack on child poverty; urgent action to prevent the institutionalization of children; and health and education policies that focus on adequate financing, efficiency and equity. It points out that the fall in the number

of children in the region leaves no excuse for inadequate investment in their well-being.

28. The TransMONEE database remains a vital component of the current programme with its comprehensive data on social and economic trends in 27 countries. The database, available through the IRC web site, is used extensively by other international organizations, particularly the World Bank.

29. The data-driven policy analysis of the MONEE Project has been instrumental in consolidating collaboration with UNICEF in the region and providing technical support to key institutions and UNICEF country offices. In April 2002, it organized the first Innocenti Orientation Workshop for senior UNICEF staff taking up new positions in the Central and Eastern Europe/CIS region.

30. Building on its experience and expertise over the last 10 years, the MONEE Project has now split its monitoring and policy functions. A new *Social Monitor* series of publications will focus on overall trends and present pure data on critical child rights areas such as health, education and poverty. Meanwhile, thematic *Regional Reports* will continue to focus on priority themes and policy recommendations for the region.

31. IRC has adapted the methodologies used by the MONEE Project to other regions, in partnership with the relevant UNICEF offices. The MEDIN Project, for example, aimed to enhance capacities for the collection and analysis of data related to children to support the development of "child-friendly" policies in nine Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and the occupied Palestinian territory). The Project led to the development of a subregional database on children that was instrumental in the end-decade review process and which laid the foundations for regional follow-up actions to the Special Session on Children.

32. In Asia, IRC studied the impact of the East Asian economic crisis on children, finding that economic recovery alone would not be enough to tackle the underlying problems that existed long before the crisis, and calling for strong social safety nets to protect the vulnerable. The findings were presented to the Ministerial Consultation in Beijing, China, during the preparatory process for the Special Session on Children.

Report Cards

33. The IRC *Report Card* series, launched in 2000, reflects the universality of children's rights and the global mandate of UNICEF as an advocate for children in industrialized as well as developing countries. They are a unique tool to monitor progress for children in rich countries; promote "child-friendly" policies; and advocate for social change in areas that are critical to children, including child poverty, injuries, teenage births and inequality in education (the latter to be issued later in 2002). National Committees for UNICEF have welcomed the series as an effective way to introduce UNICEF to influential audiences, to widen alliances and to advocate in favour of "child-friendly" policies.

Childhood injuries

The second in the *Report Card* series, "A League Table of Child Injury Deaths in Rich Nations" (February 2001), finds that injuries kill over 20,000 children every year in OECD countries. The report was used by the European Child Safety Alliance as the core reference for its *White Book on Child Safety in Europe*. It is stimulating debate in a number of developing countries, where traffic accidents, in particular, are an emerging issue.

D. Collaboration with the *Istituto degli Innocenti*

34. IRC is hosted in Florence by the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, which was established as Europe's first foundling hospital in 1419 and still takes a lead role on behalf of children today. The two institutions have worked in partnership on a number of initiatives over the years, including the creation of the Innocenti Library on children's rights, the first international child rights resource centre in Italy, which opened in July 2001. Its role as an international resource centre — linked to relevant networks — will be strengthened under the new programme.

35. The creation and development of the "Child-Friendly" Cities Secretariat has been another area of collaboration with both the *Istituto degli Innocenti* and the Italian Committee for UNICEF. This initiative has enabled advocacy in favour of local governance for children and the promotion of close alliances with the Italian initiative for sustainable cities for children (*Città Sostenibili dei Bambini e delle Bambine*).

E. Communication

36. The previous report to the Executive Board (E/ICEF/1999/16) highlighted communication as a priority for the current programme to improve the dissemination of research, enhance links with the rest of UNICEF, rationalize publications, improve media outreach and develop an effective web site. This approach aimed to increase IRC visibility within UNICEF and beyond. As a result, a major strategy was implemented to address priority areas, including:

(a) **Promotion of IRC within UNICEF**. Enhanced collaboration was achieved with UNICEF offices and National Committees to maximize the impact of IRC;

(b) **Media promotion**. Wide coverage and outreach was achieved for IRC flagship studies and reports, with successful launches cementing links between IRC, National Committees and the rest of UNICEF;

(c) **Improved launch and distribution of publications**. Publications were rationalized and their production and distribution processes were improved.

37. The solid achievements in communication are clear, providing the foundation for further efforts to promote IRC as a centre of excellence on children's rights.

III. Proposed programme, 2003-2005

A. The Innocenti Research Centre, the medium-term strategic plan and follow-up to the Special Session on Children

38. The experience gained by IRC over the years, combined with its unique role as a research centre with a special focus on children, its field-driven and action-oriented approach and global scope, account for the Centre's major role in the MTSP. The plan highlights the role of UNICEF and IRC in research, policy analysis, communication and networking. It stresses the role of IRC in relation to children in industrialized countries and identifies areas where research is needed to promote behavioural change in favour of children's rights, such as child participation, protection from violence and gender violence, child labour, child trafficking and armed conflict. Building on its previous work, IRC will support implementation of the plan and, in particular, its priorities.

39. In its current programme, IRC contributed to the global end-decade review to assess progress towards the goals of the 1990 World Summit for Children. The future programme will see IRC actively engaged in follow-up to the Special Session on Children.

B. Programme goals

40. The programme for 2003-2005 promotes IRC as a centre of reflection and cross-fertilization of experiences and aims to increase the profile and understanding of children's issues, generate debate, influence the agendas of partners and promote learning within UNICEF itself. The programme lays the foundation for IRC:

(a) To become a strategic and reinvigorated centre of excellence for children's rights;

(b) To be a resource for UNICEF, including the expansion of existing links with UNICEF headquarters, field offices and National Committees;

(c) To enhance partnerships with research and policy institutions and development agencies;

(d) To enhance and further diversify its donor support.

41. To achieve these goals, IRC will, through its research and policy studies, contribute to:

(a) Monitoring the impact of economic and social policies on children's rights, with a particular focus on non-discrimination, exclusion, disparity and gender concerns;

(b) Promoting advocacy and policy dialogue to support implementation of international standards on children's rights and encouraging the development of "child-friendly" policies;

(c) Translating research findings into materials suitable for the public, while continuing to reach academic institutions and policy makers, and supporting global communication initiatives;

(d) Enhancing alliances and cross-fertilization of experiences with partners to advance the cause of children.

C. The Innocenti Research Centre as a centre of excellence for children's rights

42. The 2003-2005 programme will promote greater synergy between the two areas of IRC expertise — research on economic and social policies for children and research on the promotion and protection of children's rights. This approach will consolidate the child rights perspective of the work of IRC. The Centre will continue systematically to coordinate its efforts with other parts of the organization, and its work will be enriched through relevant peer review from within UNICEF, including headquarters, and distinguished external experts.

43. IRC will build on its recent successes in communication to broaden awareness of its research, to influence "child-friendly" policy-making and to fuel advocacy campaigns, including those organized by National Committees for UNICEF. The translation of research findings into accessible reports for general readership will remain a priority.

44. Key research findings will be disseminated to academic institutions and policy makers, and feed into the formulation of UNICEF policy, programme approaches, communications and advocacy. They will also be used to enhance learning within the organization and promote dialogue with UNICEF partners and other key development actors. These combined efforts will be critical to ensure increased and diversified donor support for IRC.

45. Through its research and policy studies, the IRC programme will focus on the four major activities described below.

Monitoring the impact of economic and social policies on child well-being

46. IRC will provide rigorous data-driven analysis of policies and trends to document and advise on "child-friendly" social policies and economic development in both industrialized and developing countries. IRC will act as observatory of the impact of social and economic policies on children, building on its past work and utilizing its distinct mandate within UNICEF, in close cooperation with other relevant parts of UNICEF. The programme aims to contribute to UNICEF efforts for global, regional and national monitoring, advocacy and policy reform in favour of children.

47. The new programme will focus on areas of work where IRC has a distinct contribution to make and where it has proven expertise. It will build on the success of the MONEE Project and IRC work on industrialized countries to create a core capacity to monitor and assess progress in the situation of children, young people and women as an impact to the global situation of children. This will enrich global monitoring and follow-up to the Special Session on Children and the Millennium Development Goals. While analytical work will have a strong focus on transitional and industrialized countries, the outputs of the programme will be designed to have global relevance and inspire advocacy and further research in both industrialized and developing countries. To achieve these goals, IRC will initiate research studies,

publications and databases on children, and ensure wide dissemination and strategic collaboration with relevant partners.

48. The work of IRC on industrialized countries will continue to contribute to the global mandate of UNICEF and offer a sound basis for advocacy that is unique within the organization. The collection of data and best practices from OECD countries with well-established statistical systems can widen the knowledge base of UNICEF and promote innovative approaches to global social monitoring. IRC will focus on priority areas, including allocation of resources for children and violence against children.

49. The MONEE Project will continue to monitor the situation of children and women in the 27 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States, building on its established collaboration with national statistical agencies and research institutes. The transition has produced both dynamism and disparity, with eight of the countries in this region now designated as low-income countries. Monitoring the impact of such social and economic policies and trends as debt and promoting investment in children will address the issue of poverty eradication.

50. Institutional reforms in the region present opportunities for the promotion of "child-friendly" policies and analysis of the impact of socio-economic trends on children. By addressing UNICEF regional priorities, including early childhood development, adolescent development and participation, HIV/AIDS, policies to promote family care and social inclusion, IRC will contribute to the implementation of the MTSP and advance the study of global policy issues.

51. The inter-agency project, Understanding Child Labour, offers another opportunity for IRC to play an active role in enhancing partnerships to monitor international commitments and contribute to in-depth analytical work of global relevance. The future programme has the potential to strengthen its unique public database and research on policy issues, particularly through country-based activities.

52. The new programme will generate flagship reports, including the *Report Cards*, and two new publications from the MONEE Project: the *Social Monitor*, examining overall trends in the transition countries; and the *Regional Monitoring Report*, focusing on specific themes and policy recommendations. These and other publications will capitalize on surveys and analysis developed in preparation for the Special Session on Children, and provide advocacy and policy materials for use at global, regional and country levels for a wide-ranging audience. They will contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and will be essential capacity-building tools for UNICEF staff and partners.

Promoting implementation of international standards and creating awareness of children's rights

53. Building upon its longstanding efforts and expertise, IRC will continue to document lessons from the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, develop thematic studies and advocacy tools to support the implementation of international standards, influence "child-friendly" policies, and generate leadership and good governance for children.

54. Studies will be conducted on the impact of the implementation of the Convention at the national level. Taking into account national and regional end-decade reports produced for the Special Session, they will focus on areas where

follow-up is expected, including the development of child-focused policies and plans, allocation of resources for children and the role of independent national institutions for the protection of children's rights. A regional process of cross-fertilization will be promoted to document UNICEF field experience in the implementation process and to inform UNICEF advocacy and policy work, as well as learning and capacity-building activities.

55. Particular emphasis will be given to child participation and the evolving capacities of the child; protection from discrimination and social exclusion (e.g. children with disabilities, indigenous children and children orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS); promotion of effective solutions for children deprived of a family environment (with an emphasis on children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, intercountry adoption and de-institutionalization of children); and protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation (e.g. child trafficking and juvenile justice).

Translating international commitments for children at the subnational level

56. Building on its experience as the International Secretariat for the "Child-Friendly" Cities Initiative, IRC will continue to promote local governance in favour of children's rights in developing and industrialized nations, including through "child-friendly" planning, policy-making and budgetary decisions.

57. In the new programme, IRC will continue to collect, analyse and disseminate information on good practices and innovative approaches in both developing and industrialized nations, with a view to promoting child participation in decision-making and assessment processes. This initiative will be an information source for UNICEF and its partners, and strengthen the efforts of "child-friendly" cities and mayors to promote local governance in favour of children.

Contributing to the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other international mechanisms dealing with children's rights

58. The Committee on the Rights of the Child is expected to play a catalytic role in the follow-up to the Special Session on Children. In the context of broad UNICEF collaboration with the Committee, IRC will strengthen its contribution to the substantive work of this body and other relevant international mechanisms. Acting as a "think tank" and offering technical expertise, research, data-driven analysis and policy studies, it will support the development of general comments to interpret provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Committee's annual thematic discussions on relevant child topics. Collaboration will be enhanced with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and its research branch, with an emphasis on poverty and children's rights and protection from discrimination, violence and exploitation.

59. This work aims to narrow the gap between United Nations normative and operational activities, increase awareness of children's rights and advance the implementation of international normative standards.

D. The Innocenti Research Centre as a resource for UNICEF

60. IRC will enhance its collaboration with other branches of UNICEF, particularly in relation to the five organizational priorities of the MTSP, follow-up to the Special Session on Children and the Millennium Development Goals.

61. While maintaining close cooperation with different parts of the organization, IRC will pursue a privileged relationship with the members of the Programme Group, of which it is a member. It will also enhance close partnerships with UNICEF regional offices, continuing to research areas of relevance to regional priorities. This will build on the experience of the MONEE Project in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and Baltic States; on research on child trafficking in West and Central Africa; and on the impact of HIV/AIDS on children, undertaken with the Regional Offices for Eastern and Southern Africa, and for East Asia and the Pacific.

62. Determined to enhance its relevance to the field, IRC conducted a rapid survey of UNICEF country offices in 2001 to assess how IRC is perceived and anticipate priority areas for its research. More than 70 offices responded and expressed both appreciation for the work of IRC and high expectations for future research. The offices recommended such areas as policy impact assessment and areas requiring social and behavioural change, with an emphasis on the prevention of HIV/AIDS, child participation and special protection, including child labour, armed conflict, sexual exploitation and violence against children, which will be taken into account by the new programme.

63. Partnerships with National Committees for UNICEF provide a strategic network to promote and use IRC studies to advance the cause of children. Increasingly, National Committees act as catalysts for partnerships with other institutions and potential donors. At a recent meeting of the Standing Group of National Committees and the Regional Office for Europe, the Committees expressed strong support for the work of IRC and its proposed new direction, particularly its research on industrialized countries, child trafficking and social exclusion, and the role of IRC in supporting their advocacy campaigns.

E. Enhancing external partnerships to advance the cause of children

64. The MTSP reaffirms partnership as a key strategy for the achievement of organizational priorities. This is of particular relevance for IRC in its work to raise the profile of children's rights, to influence global development discussions, and to maintain the UNICEF capacity for world-class, impartial analysis on policies and trends.

65. Throughout its history, IRC has sought to maximize limited resources through collaboration. There have been constant and close relationships with the Government of Italy and the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, but in recent years there has been a steady increase in IRC partnerships within and beyond the United Nations system. Major partners include ILO, UNHCHR, WHO, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Department for International Development (United Kingdom), the Swedish International Development Authority, the European Union and many other development agencies, research institutions and relevant NGOs.

66. One remarkable example of IRC partnerships is provided by the MONEE Project, which is based on a network of correspondents in the national statistical offices and research centres in all 27 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States. This network allows the Project to contribute to the policy-making process at the national level.

67. Discussing the IRC programme for 2003-2005, the International Advisory Committee recommended enhanced networking with other research and policy institutions in and beyond Europe to maximize its impact, strengthen its intellectual independence and share the workload by tapping into other relevant circles of expertise. The new programme aims to consolidate progress achieved in Europe and to advance the partnership process in other regions through close collaboration with UNICEF regional offices.

The European Network on a research agenda on children in armed conflict

68. To follow-up on the first international workshop on "Filling the Knowledge Gaps: a research agenda on children in armed conflict", and with the support of the Government of Italy, IRC will act as focal point for a European Network on this issue. IRC will act as a catalyst for the Network and will use its expertise to formulate research studies to address knowledge gaps in areas of relevance to UNICEF (e.g. birth registration in war-affected countries and juvenile justice systems in post-conflict situations).

69. IRC will work closely with the *Istituto degli Innocenti* in this area, promoting the Innocenti Library as an international reference centre of documentation on children in armed conflict.

European network of children's centres

70. IRC will strengthen its association with the European network of children's centres being established by the European Union to advance implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and promote information exchange on relevant national experiences. The network may play a critical role in follow-up to the Special Session on Children by increasing awareness of children's issues, promoting cross-fertilization of national experiences and developing relevant research.

71. IRC plans to contribute its research, policy studies and advocacy materials to this initiative, while promoting close collaboration with its secretariat, which is hosted at the *Istituto degli Innocenti* and anchored to the documentation of the Innocenti Library.

Global network of independent human rights institutions for children

72. The future programme will build on existing IRC networking and collaboration with independent human rights institutions for children. This process will inform IRC studies and promote follow-up to the first global meeting of such institutions held during the Special Session on Children and to "A World Fit for Children".

F. Communication and the enhancement of donor support

73. In addition to initiatives to build alliances to enhance the visibility and strategic dissemination of IRC research, the future programme will aim to broaden the IRC donor base.

74. Communication will provide the foundation for IRC efforts to become a centre of excellence for child rights and will be essential to the achievement of every other priority. Successes in this area during the current programme will provide the impetus for a new communication thrust based on visibility and alliance-building.

75. IRC will exploit its wide range of high quality, original research products — such as the *Innocenti Digests*, the *Report Cards* and the *Social Monitor* — to position children's rights high in international debates and on national political agendas to promote "child-friendly" policies and attract new partners to the campaign to create a world fit for children. These initiatives are expected to create additional opportunities to widen the IRC funding and donor base — a critical requirement for the implementation of the future programme.

G. Innocenti Research Centre funding and staffing

76. Following renewal of the agreement between the Government of Italy and UNICEF, the Government of Italy has pledged to continue to provide a minimum of approximately $5 million to support the core staff and operational costs for the new programme. Additional support will be provided, from available resources, to strengthen cooperation between IRC and the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, particularly in relation to the Innocenti Library and its development as an international knowledge centre on children's rights.

77. The steady and decisive annual contribution from the Government of Italy has remained stable for the past 14 years (totalling 10.5 billion lire). However, as a result of exchange rate fluctuations, value in United States dollars has fallen considerably, while costs have continued to rise, a trend the Government of Italy has committed to reverse.

78. In response to this very challenging situation, IRC has made concerted efforts to broaden its donor base during the current cycle. Important contributions were made to various IRC initiatives by the Governments of Finland, Norway and Sweden, the World Bank, development agencies and National Committees for UNICEF. The Government of Sweden has pledged further support for the core programme for 2003-2005. Financial support from UNICEF has also increased, partly through the funding of the post of Director from regular resources, and partly through collaboration on research projects with headquarters divisions and regional and country offices. UNICEF will pursue efforts to diversify IRC donor support, recognizing the quality, relevance and visibility of IRC studies and publications. This programme proposal is based on this expectation.

79. The structure of IRC will reflect its two main substantive areas of work, with communications and alliance-building as cross-cutting elements, and with the support of the operations unit. The Centre will continue to make strategic use of its expertise and human resources, and its relatively small regular staff is expected to total 25 across all categories. Based on assurances of a sustained core contribution

from the Government of Italy, additional core funding from the Government of Sweden and the mobilization of additional financial support from UNICEF, the proposed programme will allow IRC to maximize the potential of existing and future alliances with key partners and donors.

IV. Draft recommendation

80. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board adopt the following draft recommendation:

The Executive Board,

Having reviewed the progress report on the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (IRC) and its proposed activities for 2003-2005 (E/ICEF/2002/13),

1. *Welcomes* the research, advocacy and policy studies conducted by IRC in the current programme and *endorses* the framework for further work, as contained in E/ICEF/2002/13;

2. *Authorizes* a three-year extension of the Centre's programme for the period 2003-2005 with a total allocation of $14 million in supplementary funding (other resources), of which the Government of Italy has pledged to provide a minimum of Euro 5,430,000 (approximately $5 million) for the core activities of the Centre, with the remainder to be sought from other donors, including a further additional contribution from the Government of Italy, for specific activities.

Estimated breakdown of expenditures (2003-2005)[a]

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	2003	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
Programme costs				
Research in current and emerging programme areas, monitoring, policy analysis, expert workshops and networking[b]	2 965	3 200	3 335	9 500
Advocacy, communication, publications, documentation and web site	500	550	600	1650
Collaboration with *Istituto degli Innocenti*	300	300	300	900
Subtotal	**3 765**	**4 050**	**4 235**	**12 050**
Operating costs				
Support staff costs	335	350	365	1 050
General operating costs (information technology, communications, supplies, maintenance, equipment	300	300	300	900
Subtotal	**635**	**650**	**665**	**1 950**
Totals	**4 400**	**4 700**	**4 900**	**14 000[c]**

[a] The three-year contribution from the Government of Italy is 5.4 million Euro, the equivalent of $5 million at the June 2002 exchange rate, with the remainder to be sought from other donors, including further additional contribution from the Government of Italy.

[b] The Director's post and travelling costs are funded from the support budget of regular resources.

[c] Less the 1 per cent charge for recovery of UNICEF incremental operating costs for supplementary-funded projects.